



Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

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FREE CAMPING WEEKEND STARTS MAY 5

DES MOINES – A favorable weather forecast. A nice, warm spring. Fishing is good. All signs point to a busy weekend in Iowa State Parks for the 2006 free camping weekend. Iowa residents may waive the usual camping fees and stay for free in an Iowa State Park Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources State Parks Bureau established free camping weekend as the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights in May. The free camping is available to Iowans only and only on a first come, first serve basis; reservations are not accepted for this weekend. Nonresidents may camp, but must pay the appropriate camping fee. All other state park rules remain in effect.

“Our staff is putting the finishing touches to the spring work in our parks before the weekend. It looks like the weather will cooperate, so we are expecting a busy weekend,” said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the state parks bureau. “We are encouraging people who have been away from camping for a while, or who would like to try camping, to use this weekend as a way to give it a try on us. Of course our hope is that they have a good experience and want to come back.”

There are a number of interpretive programs available during the free camping weekend, including a night hike at Dolliver State Park to a trumpeter swan program at Clear Lake State Park to a program on wild cats in Iowa at Green Valley State Park. A complete list of programs is available on the DNR’s website at www.iowadnr.com, then

click on state parks, then on events calendar on the left side navigation column under Recreation Opportunities. The programs are free.

Free camping weekend is in DNR managed Iowa state parks, recreation areas and state forest campgrounds. For a complete list of DNR managed campgrounds, go to www.iowadnr.com, click on state parks in the left hand navigation column, then on State Parks List in the same navigation column.

There are 52 Iowa state parks that offer camping. Campers spent nearly 690,000 nights in Iowa state parks in 2005, which was an increase from 2004, when campers spent 665,000 nights. The main camping season is May 1 through Sept. 30. A campsite in a campground with flush toilets and showers with electricity costs \$16 per night and without electricity costs \$11 per night. The cost goes to \$14 per night and \$9 per night in campgrounds with no showers provided and either vault latrines or flush toilets available.

The campground at Lake Darling State Park will be open for free camping weekend, but the shower and dump station, as well as the sewer system for sites with full hook-ups, will not be available. Work is continuing on the new wastewater collection system in the park, and weather permitting, it should wrap up by the end of May.

Iowa's free camping weekend began in 2002 as a way to get people thinking and talking about camping, and to encourage them spend a weekend camping in state parks.

County and Federal campgrounds are not part of the free weekend.

For more information, contact your local state park, or call Szcodronski at 515-281-8674.

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EVENTS DURING STATE PARKS FREE CAMPING WEEKEND

DES MOINES – From wildflowers to bobcats, the variety of free programs offered in Iowa state parks during free camping weekend are as different as Pikes Peak is to Black Hawk state parks.

“These programs are just another feature available to our visitors and campers during the free camping weekend. We have programs throughout the summer and fall that accent the features unique in the park and offer our visitors something else, in addition to the usual park experiences,” said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources’ state parks bureau.

For more details, go to www.iowadnr.com and click on state parks, then on events calendar on the left side navigation column under Recreation Opportunities.

FRIDAY, MAY 5

Black Hawk State Park, Marvelous Mothers, 8 to 9 p.m.

Elk Rock State Park, Cooking and Camping Program

Red Haw State Park, Fish and Fishing, 7 p.m.

Volga River Recreation Area, State Parks Reservation System, 7 p.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 6

Beeds Lake State Park, Wildlife Identification, 1 to 3 p.m., at Beeds Lake Lodge

Black Hawk State Park, Prairie Pothole Region question and answer session, evening,

Bellevue State Park, Butterfly Gardening, 1 to 4 p.m., in the Butterfly Garden

Brushy Creek State Recreation Area, Free Kids Fishing Derby, 9 a.m. to Noon, at Fish Pier Point

Cedar Rock State Park, Candle Light Walk, 7 to 10 p.m., the annual spring open house

Clear Lake State Park, Trumpeter Swan program, 4 p.m., possible swan release, weather permitting

Dolliver State Park, Night Hike, 7 p.m., at the main picnic area across from the playground

Elk Rock State Park, Snake Program, 4 p.m.

George Wyth State Park, Who is Watching Who?, 9 a.m. at the shower building, bring binoculars and comfortable shoes

Green Valley State Park, Wild Cats in Iowa, program will be in the campground

Honey Creek State Park, Morel Mushrooms, 8 p.m., north shower buildings

Lacey Keosauqua State Park, Fish in Iowa, 9:30 a.m., in the campground

Lacey Keosauqua State Park, Wetlands and Wildlife, 10:15 a.m., in the campground

Lake Macbride State Park, Bird Program, mid morning, at the playground in the modern campground

Lake Keomah State Park, Bobcats and River Otters, 7 p.m., in the park

Lake Manawa State Park, Parks Reservation System, 1 p.m., in the campgrounds

Ledges State Park, Prairie Planting Day, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the gazebo east of the campground entrance, lunch will be provided

McIntosh Woods State Park, Swans and Furbearers, 5 p.m., in the campground

Palisades-Kepler State Park, Nature Hike, 10 a.m., at the campground entrance

Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area, Build Nesting Boxes, Camping Care, Fishing programs, see park staff for details

Pikes Peak State Park, Native American Program, 6 p.m.

Pilot Knob State Park, Wildflower Scavenger Hunt, all day Saturday and results on Sunday

Rock Creek State Park, Snakes, 2 p.m.

Rock Creek State Park, Owls, 6:30 p.m.

Stone State Park, Scavenger Hunt, see park staff for details

Viking Lake State Park, Viking Lake Past, Present and Future, 4 p.m.

Walnut Woods State Park, Bird Watching Hike, 7:30 a.m., at the Bird Observation Area

Waubonsie State Park, Camp Wa-Shawtee Addition, see staff for details

SUNDAY, MAY 7

Bellevue State Park, Butterfly Gardening, 1 to 4 p.m., in the Butterfly Garden

Lake Manawa State Park, Volunteer Clean up Day, 1 p.m., at shelter #5, prizes awarded to volunteers at 4 p.m.

Pleasant Creek State Recreation Area, Build Nesting Boxes, Camping Care, Fishing programs, see park staff for details

Stone State Park, Scavenger Hunt, see park staff for details

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FARM PONDS POPULAR AMONG ANGLERS

DES MOINES – Spring offers some of the best fishing opportunities of all seasons as fish move close to shore preparing to spawn and are aggressively feeding and protecting their nests. Some of the best, early spring takes place on farm ponds, which are smaller and tend to warm more quickly.

Farm ponds consistently have some of the biggest largemouth bass, and offer some excellent bluegill fishing every year. Estimates say there are more than 80,000 farm ponds in Iowa that provide hours of exciting fishing opportunities in a secluded setting.

Since farm ponds are privately owned, anglers must receive permission from the landowner – or the farming tenant – before they enter the property. A common misconception is that if the Iowa Department of Natural Resources stocked the pond, it is open to public fishing. Not true.

“We sell fish at the cost of production to landowners with new or renovated ponds that meet certain minimum criteria. There is no doubt that farm ponds are popular places to fish. We know that each year, licensed anglers take more than 1 million fishing trips to Iowa farm ponds,” said Marion Conover, chief of the Iowa DNR’s fisheries bureau.

Another common misconception involves who needs a fishing license when fishing a farm pond. All anglers are required to have a current fishing license to fish on farm ponds. The only exception is the landowner, tenant and their minor children.

“For whatever reason, many anglers believe they are not required to have a valid Iowa fishing license when fishing someone else’s farm pond, and that is simply not the case,” Conover said. “Only the landowner and tenant and the minor children may fish on the pond without a license.”

All other Iowa fishing regulations apply when fishing farm ponds or other private waters.

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SHIMEK FOREST BIRD CONSERVATION AREA DEDICATION

FARMINGTON - A ceremony to dedicate the Shimek Forest area as Iowa's newest Bird Conservation Area (BCA) will take place May 16, at 1 p.m. The event will be held at the Shimek Forest Headquarters, located about 1 mile northeast of Farmington along county road J56 (Primrose Road).

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is hosting the dedication that will include brief presentations and the unveiling of a special Bird Conservation Area sign. Following the ceremony, there will be a short birding hike in Shimek Forest.

"Designation of Shimek Forest as Iowa's eighth official Bird Conservation Area will give state and national recognition to the area's importance for resident and migratory forest birds," said Bruce Ehresman, DNR wildlife diversity program biologist. "Aside from extreme northeastern Iowa, the Shimek Forest complex holds the largest tracts of contiguous forest in the state, and these forests appear to be critical nesting habitat for large forest species such as Cerulean Warbler, Veery, Acadian Flycatcher, and Broad-winged Hawk."

"The creation of Bird Conservation Areas in Iowa is a priority for DNR's wildlife diversity program and is part of a larger international effort promoting assistance for birds with the greatest conservation need," said Doug Harr, coordinator of the program.

The emphasis of the Bird Conservation Area program is encouraging habitat conservation at a large landscape level to establish stable or growing bird populations. Each BCA includes a combination of well-managed public and private lands, and the Shimek Forest area, with its existing tracts of public forests interspersed with privately owned forests, represents the perfect candidate for Iowa's next Bird Conservation Area.

The Shimek Forest BCA is the result of state, federal, and county agencies, as well as private organizations and citizens, cooperating together to emphasize the importance of bird habitat. Some of these partners include the Lee and Van Buren County Conservation Boards, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Iowa Wild Turkey Federation and private landowners. "This total effort represents a partnership that serves as an excellent example of ways to better conserve all natural resources in this unique forested landscape," says John Byrd, DNR area forester and Shimek Forest manager.

The Croton Unit of Shimek Forest, in particular, already is an important birding area for folks searching for hard-to-find forest birds.

"Bird watching is now among the nation's fastest-growing outdoor activities, and it is anticipated that this new BCA will attract even more bird enthusiasts from throughout the region. The result should be growth in the local tourism economy while also building sustainable local bird populations," Harr said.

The public is welcome to attend this event. Bird watchers and appreciators of forests alike are asked to join this celebration of dedicating this very important forest Bird Conservation Area.

For more information, contact Ehresman at (515) 432-2823, Harr at (515) 281-4815 or Byrd at (319) 878-3811.

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TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO ORDER TREES FROM THE STATE FOREST NURSERY

The State Forest Nursery will continue accepting conservation tree and shrub seedling orders until May 31. More than 31 different species are still available and include 17 to 24-inch tall bur, pin, red, swamp white and white oak trees native to Iowa.

“With the recent rains and approaching warmer temperatures, now is the ideal time to plant conservation trees and shrubs to create a forest, or to stabilize a stream bank and in turn create some needed wildlife habitat,” said John Walkowiak, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources forestry bureau.

The nursery has silver maple, swamp white oak, willows and native shrubs such as arrow wood, ninebark or highbush cranberry available to stabilize eroding stream banks or establish riparian buffer strips. Use native shrubs including wild plum, gray or silky dogwoods along with evergreens such as red or white pine to create habitat for native wildlife and songbirds.

Seedlings can be ordered in species units of 100 with a minimum total order of 500. Prices are \$0.25 to \$0.45 per seedling depending on size and species. Shipping to your door is \$5 per 100 plants.

For the smaller areas, foresters recommend the use of the Create A Wildlife packet where landowners can purchase up to 4 different species in units of 50 plants for a total of 200 trees and or shrubs for \$90 plus shipping. “This wildlife packet is perfect for someone with ½ acre of land to devote to wildlife habitat”, says Walkowiak. “For those with larger backyard , we have developed in cooperation with Audubon Iowa a Songbird packet that contains 2 bur oak, 2 white pine, 4 wild plum, 4 chokecherry, 4 gray dogwood and 4 serviceberry for only \$20 including shipping” he stated.

“Now is an ideal time to plant trees and shrubs, but you have to act fast to get them ordered and planted to get the benefits of spring growth before the heat of summer arrives,” Walkowiak said.

For more details for to order, call the State Forest Nursery at 800 865-2477. Information and on-line order form are also available at www.iowadnr.com/forestry/.

For more information contact: Walkowiak at 515-242-5966 or at john.walkowiak@dnr.state.ia.us

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of May 2, 2006

www.iowadnr.com

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: River stage was 9 feet at Guttenberg on Tuesday and falling, but water levels are forecasted to level out by Wednesday. The gates at Lock and Dam 10 are in and water temperature is 57 degrees. Many species of fish are beginning to bite with the warmer water temperatures. Many anglers are catching nice-sized bluegill at the new DNR boat ramp in Guttenberg (**Pool 11**) and also along the emergency spillway on the Wisconsin side. Bluegill and crappie fishing is fair to good in **Pools 12 to 15**, and the bite will improve as the water temperatures rise. Nice size freshwater drum have bit consistently this spring. Simple rigs with worms and sliding egg sinkers have been the most effective. Drum are being caught in the tailwaters at Lynxville (**Pool 10**) and Guttenberg (**Pool 11**), but can also be found in many other places with moderate current in **Pools 9 to 11**. A few flathead catfish are being caught using chubs in the tailwater areas (**Pools 9 to 11**) and channel catfish are fair to good using stink bait, cut bait, chicken liver and night crawlers. **Pool 10** anglers are reporting catching bluegill and crappie below Lock and Dam 9. Walleye and sauger spawning is over and fish have moved out of the tailwater areas and can be found at their normal summer haunts. Walleye are beginning to bite off the ends of wing dams in **Pools 9 to 14**. Largemouth bass are beginning to bite on plastic spinner baits fished in the backwater areas of **Pools 12 to 15**. White bass are being caught in areas of current where the bait fish are concentrating in **Pools 12 to 15**.

Upper Iowa (Winneshiek and Allamakee) and **Turkey** (Clayton) **rivers:** Sucker fishing was good to excellent before the weekend rains. Fishing will improve as water conditions stabilize.

Big Woods Lake (Black Hawk): Crappie fishing is good dragging a 1/32-ounce twister tail through 5 to 15 feet of water. Crappie length is about 8 to 9 inches.

South Prairie Lake (Black Hawk): Anglers are catching a few crappies on minnows. This lake has excellent shore access for anglers.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Fishing for channel catfish is good using cut baits or night crawlers. The best fishing can be found in the upper half of the lake in or near the flow from the Maquoketa River.

Silver Lake (Delaware): Seven-inch bluegills are hitting jigs tipped with a wax worm suspended three feet below a bobber.

Meyer Lake (Winneshiek) and **Lake Hendricks** (Howard): Largemouth bass fishing is fair to good using plastic worms fished near woody structure or rocks. Crappie and bluegill fishing is still slow in these lakes.

Sweet Marsh Lake (Bremer): Crappie fishing is fair to good in the canal and along the rocky shorelines by the dike.

Volga Lake (Fayette): A few crappies are biting on small minnows fished near the dam. Bluegill fishing is fair using wax worms fished off the rocks along the dam.

Trout fishing is good to excellent. The weekend rains slowed fishing on a few areas, but most streams remained clear and fishing conditions were excellent. Stocking information for specific streams can be found on the web by going through the DNR web site at www.iowadnr.com or directly to <http://www.iowadnr.com/fish/news/stockrep/groupstock.pdf>. Anglers may also call the recorded trout stocking information hotline at 563-927-5736.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

Northwest

Walleye season opens at 12 a.m., May 6 on East and West Okoboji lakes, and on Spirit Lake. Muskellunge season remains closed until May 21 on the same lakes.

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): A few crappies are being caught around Buffalo Run and Templar Park from shore using small tube and hair jigs. Anglers are catching bullheads and largemouth bass at the North Grade.

West Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Bluegills are being caught in the canals, Triboji and the Harbor with a piece of garden worm. Crappies are being caught around the entrances to the canals and the Harbor with little tube jigs. Anglers are catching largemouth bass in the canals and around brush using soft plastic lures. Smallmouth bass are being caught off the deer rocks using drop shot rigs and vertical jigging.

East Okoboji Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching white bass in the spillway. A reminder to anglers – snagging is illegal around bridge areas and below the spillway. Try white minnow imitating baits or small inline spinners.

Lake Minnewashta (Dickinson): Anglers are catching walleyes in the evening throwing jigs. Remember the 14-inch minimum length limit.

Center Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is good on the south end of the lake. Anglers are catching crappies and bluegills around brush along with a few white bass.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Walleye fishing is fair in the evening using minnows. Anglers are catching mostly small fish.

Pleasant Lake (Dickinson): Anglers are catching some 10-inch yellow perch.

Ingham Lake (Emmet): Anglers are catching 9 to 11-inch crappies, and 2 to 5 pound channel catfish around submerged brush.

West Fork Des Moines River (Emmet): Some nice walleyes are being caught using jigs around creek inlets.

Willow Creek (Osceola): There is a good population of 3 to 5-pound channel catfish in the lake. Fish around the submerged brush and along the dam.

Five Island Lake (Palo Alto): Anglers are catching channel catfish on cut bait. Walleyes between 12 and 20 inches are being caught in the evening.

Lost Island Lake (Clay and Palo Alto): Black crappies are being caught around the riprap.

Lake Pahoja (Lyon): Small crappies are being caught from the pier using small jigs.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Anglers are catching bass along the shoreline and in areas with structure. Walleye fishing has increased, with the early morning being the best time to fish. The recent rain and warmer weather should bring the panfish to the shoreline and bays.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): A few walleyes are being caught on leeches and jig heads in the dredge cuts. Fishing is good for 8 to 9-inch bullheads.

North Twin Lake (Calhoun): Fishing is good for yellow bass, crappies and bluegills.

Yellow Smoke Lake (Crawford): Bluegill and crappie fishing is fair to good. Boat anglers and those fishing from the pier have had good luck.

Nelson Park (Crawford): Fishing is good for 8-inch and larger bluegills using jigs and wax worms from the dam.

Badger Lake (Webster): Fishing is good for 8 to 10-inch crappies using small jigs under a little bobber.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Walleye fishing is fair near the shallow rocky shorelines and the reefs. Fish these areas in the mornings and evening for the best action. Jigs and minnows are producing the best, but some fish are being taken while trolling crankbaits. Yellow bass fishing has been fair to good. Fish near the island, Dodge's Point, the outlet area, Farmer's beach and the north shore. Use small jigs, minnows and cut bait for the best yellow action. Bullhead fishing is fair at the Ventura Grade Access using night crawlers on the bottom.

Rice Lake (Winnebago): Bullhead fishing is good using night crawlers on the bottom.

Crystal Lake (Hancock): Bullhead fishing is good. Fish the shorelines in the evening for the best action. Anglers are catching channel catfish on night crawlers, dead chubs and chicken liver.

Lake Cornelia (Wright): Yellow perch and crappies are biting on minnows fished along the north shoreline.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Don Williams (Boone): Fishing is good for crappies using jigs and minnows in 10 to 15 feet of water over structure. Bluegill fishing has been good using night crawlers. Channel catfish are being caught using chicken livers.

Hickory Grove (Story): Crappie fishing has been fair using worms and bobbers in deeper water. Bluegill fishing has been slow with worms. Largemouth bass fishing is picking up, particularly around the rockier areas.

Big Creek (Polk): Crappie fishing has been slow to fair using jigs and minnows with the better areas near the dam and in the east arm of the lake. Anglers reported catching smaller walleye with jigs and minnows, with some nicer size fish mixed in.

Easter Lake (Polk): Fishing is good for 8 to 9-inch crappies using jigs and minnows suspended in 8 to 10 feet of water. Bluegill fishing is fair. Several walleye have been reported, with some longer than 15 inches. Largemouth bass fishing is fair along the rocky areas. Channel catfish fishing has been good with night crawlers.

Saylorville Lake (Polk): Crappie fishing has improved, particularly in the Sandpiper area and below the outlet from Big Creek Lake. Some reports of white bass/wipers being caught below the outlet from Big Creek.

Below Saylorville Dam (Polk): White bass/wiper and walleye fishing has been good using jigs and/or minnows. Channel catfish fishing has been good in the river and in the tailwater ponds on minnows and night crawlers. Crappie fishing has been good in the tailwater ponds with jigs and minnows.

Below Scott Street Dam: (Polk): Anglers are catching 8 to 12-inch white bass on twisters.

Rock Creek (Jasper): Crappie fishing is good on jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been good using night crawlers fishing from 3 to 5 feet deep from shore and from boats. Channel catfish, from 10 to 15 pounds, are being caught on cut bait and chicken liver.

Below Lake Red Rock (Marion): Fishing is fair for white bass and walleye using jigs in the tailwater area. Channel catfish fishing has picked up with some nice fish caught on cut baits and liver.

Lake Ahquabi (Warren): Crappie fishing has picked up, with most anglers using jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing has been fair with most activity around the fishing house. Largemouth bass fishing has been good, although most of the fish catch are below the legal length limit.

Hooper Lake (Warren): Crappie fishing is fair with jigs and minnows. Bluegill fishing is fair using small jigs. Largemouth bass fishing is best along the rocky dam area with crankbaits.

Farm Ponds: Fishing is good for bluegill in 3 to 5 feet of water on night crawlers. Crappie and largemouth bass fishing is good.

Green Valley (Union): Channel catfish are biting on night crawlers and dead minnows. Several crappies can be caught over and around cover or from the stake beds on jigs and minnows. Some bluegill can be caught using jigs and night crawlers in 6 to 8 feet of water near cover.

Three Mile (Union): Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers and stink baits. Bluegill and crappie can be caught in 6 to 10 feet of water over cover with jigs, night crawlers or minnows. Some walleyes are being caught on jigs while crappie fishing.

Icaria (Adams): Channel catfish up to 2 ½ pounds can be caught with night crawlers.

Binder Reservoir (Adams): Anglers are catching channel catfish up to 2 ½ pounds.

Little River (Decatur): Several nice crappies can be caught from shore in the rocks or near cover on minnows or jigs. Some walleye are being caught by trolling the points with night crawlers or with jigs while crappie fishing.

Slip Bluff (Decatur): Some bluegills can be caught from the brush piles and the corners of the dam on night crawlers.

Wilson Lake (Taylor): Crappies can be caught from the dam.

Windmill Lake (Taylor): Bluegills are biting in the corners of the dam and from the coves.

West Osceola (Clarke): Large numbers of 8-inch crappies can be caught from the dam area and the backs of the coves in 6 feet of water. The lake is 40 inches low. Use caution when using the east main ramp.

Grade Lake (Clarke): Crappies can be caught in 6 to 8 feet of water or from the dam.

Badger Creek (Madison): Crappie 7 to 9 inches can be caught from shore near rock using jigs.

West Lenox (Taylor): Crappies can be caught from shore in 5 to 8 feet of water using small jigs or night crawlers

Orient (Adair): Fishing is good for 2 to 3 pound channel catfish and for 1 to 2 pound bullheads on night crawlers. A few crappies are being caught along the shoreline.

Greenfield (Adair): Crappie fishing has slowed with cooler weather. A few bluegills can be caught using jigs tipped with night crawlers.

Nodaway (Adair): Crappie fishing is slow using jigs and minnows. Channel catfish are being caught on night crawlers in shallow areas. Greenfield and Nodaway have low water levels. The best fishing from shore would be off the dam.

Meadow (Adair): A few crappies are being caught along shoreline using minnows. Largemouth bass are being caught around brush piles

Littlefield (Audubon): Crappie fishing is fair using minnows on the east bay under the road. A few channel catfish are being caught using night crawlers.

Anita (Cass): The lake is still 5 feet low and has limited shoreline access. The lake contains a good fish population and fishing should be good.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Wiper fishing is fair on night crawlers fished on the bottom. Walleye fishing has slowed. Crappie fishing is starting to pick up in the lagoon area. Largemouth bass are being picked up on the west side of lake.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Crappies are starting to move in to shore. A few are being caught using jigs and minnows. Channel catfish fishing is slow but a few are being caught on rocky points. Use a slow retrieve.

Willow (Harrison): Crappie fishing is fair using minnows and a bobber in 8 to 10 feet of water. A few 7 to 8-inch bluegills are being caught.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: The water temperatures at Lock and Dam 16 (Muscatine) is 59 degrees and the river pool stage for Pool 16 is 10.43 feet. Fishing has slowed due to a drop in water levels; further declines in water levels are expected over the next several days. Fishing has slowed for walleye and sauger. Anglers report catching a few fish below the Arsenal Dam and Sylvan Slough area on upper **Pool 16**. Most of the fish caught are reported as below the length limit. Try using jigs tipped with minnows and crankbaits for walleye and sauger. Fishing for channel catfish continues to be good in the backwaters and the mouths of tributary rivers and streams on shad guts and night crawlers. White bass fishing continues to be good on jigs, spinners and minnows. Crappie and bluegill fishing continues to be good in the backwaters; try Sunset Marina and Andalusia, both in **Pool 16**, Big Timber area and Huron Island, both in **Pool 17** and Lake Odessa in **Pools 17/18**. These backwaters are also producing channel catfish.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Crappies are in the shallow water around the trees lying in the water. Yellow or chartreuse tube jigs would be good selections as lures.

Lake Darling (Washington): Male crappies moved into the shallow water the middle of last week. Sizes were 7 to 9 inches. The bigger females should be moving in shortly. The recent rains have not affected the water clarity and the lake remains relatively clear.

Lake Geode (Henry): Bluegills are biting in the shallow water of the upper end and the bays. Look for crappies to be in and around the cedar tree piles in the bays and along the face of the dam.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): Bluegill fishing remains excellent in shallow water, although the cold front at the end of the week moved them out. Recent rains should keep the catfish up at the marsh outlet as the marsh continues to run into the lake. Anglers have also been catching crappies around the trees and along the riprap. Most of the crappies are 9 to 10 inches with a few larger.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Crappies have been hitting on minnows fished around brush piles in 10 to 15 feet of water. Crappies are also hitting small jigs fished around the shorelines.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Crappies and bluegills have been hitting small jigs. Walleyes have been hitting on jigs tipped with a minnow. Rocky shorelines have been the most productive areas for the walleyes.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Crappies and bluegills have been hitting on small jigs fished around the face of the dam and among the tree stumps.

Lake Keomah (Mahaska): Bluegills and crappies have been hitting on small jigs tipped with a minnow. Largemouth bass have been hitting on a variety of artificial baits, including spinner baits and crankbaits.

Coralville Reservoir (Johnson): Channel catfish continue to be caught by experienced anglers. Try the shallows in the upper end of the lake but beware of the shallow water areas. Try shad or bluegills for best results.

Diamond Lake (Poweshiek): Crappies are still in the shallows and are willing to bite. Bluegills have started moving a little shallower in preparation to spawn. Try jigs and wax worms for species.

Hannan Lake (Benton): Bluegills and crappies remain deep but are being caught in the brush. Try jigs tipped with wax worms for best results. (Remember, no minnows allowed).

Rodgers Lake (Benton): Bluegills are being caught in deeper water around the brush on worms or wax worms. Largemouth bass are being caught in shallow to mid-depths on artificial lures.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

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